

EDITORIAL.

THE RECENT annual report of the president of Harvard University contains some information that should be in the possession of American botanists. The impression that Harvard University is exceedingly well endowed may be true enough in general, but it is very far from being true of the Herbarium. We have the somewhat anomalous case of the most famous herbarium in America, for many years under the direct care of the most distinguished botanist in America, and in the possession of the oldest and nearly the wealthiest university of America, living, last year, on a beggarly income of \$3,300, out of which the curator is paid, the collection increased and kept in order, and the library kept up with the times! The final touch to this showing is that \$2,200 of this amount was derived from the gifts of Dr. Gray himself, copyrights which he had bequeathed to the herbarium. To an outsider it looks as if the university was making a rare bargain in devoting \$1,100 of its own income to the maintenance of so famous an establishment as the Gray herbarium and library. Many a college in this country would be willing to give ten times that amount annually for the support of an institution which wields such an influence over American botany. American botanists have no sympathy with the corporation of Harvard University in this matter, but they do have a lasting pride in the great collection of plants it possesses, and a still stronger love for the memory of him who made it what it is. For this reason they should be ready to use their influence towards securing a proper endowment. If endowment for botanical research is a desirable thing, the endowment of the Gray Herbarium will secure the largest amount of botanical work for the least outlay of money. It requires a vast amount of money to found such an establishment, even were such a thing possible, but it does not require very much to make such an establishment productive when it is already founded.

The speedy completion of the Synoptical Flora is about the most ardent desire of American botanists, and the man who must direct its completion is Dr. Sereno Watson. But how can he even hope to accomplish so vast an undertaking with his hands tied by the drudgery of a great collection? It is astonishing that he can do any monograph work. There is need of ample assistance in caring for the plants; and there is further need of associating with Dr. Watson a corps of investigators. Only in this way can we hope for any prompt completion of the Synoptical Flora. It has occurred to us that if American botanists bestir themselves the required endowment can be easily secured.